

Application No.: 09/343,684

Docket No.: 21029-00182-US

REMARKS

The Office Action has been carefully considered. Claims 10, 12, 13 and 15-18 are pending in the application. Claim 10 has been amended by way of the present amendment.

In point 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner considers that the term "sensors for detecting different types of operating conditions in a furnace" is a broad means-plus-function limitation which may be read on Aoki's general disclosure (or other prior art).

In paragraph 12 of the Office Action, the Examiner indicates a lack of specificity in independent claim 10, namely an absence of reciting sensors, activators or operations specific to glass melting furnaces or systems for controlling glass melting furnaces.

Consequently, Applicant has amended claim 10 with the recitation of added passages supported by the specification on page 7, lines 24-38 and page 8, lines 1-15, and page 8, lines 20-26.

Thus, according to the amended claims, the combination of means is specially chosen for a glass melting furnace and for solving the problem defined page 2, lines 14-23 of the specification.

Such a combination is neither shown nor suggested by the cited references.

Applicant's prior arguments concerning the cited references is incorporated herein by reference.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 22-0185, under Order No. 21029-00182-US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: March 29, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

By

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